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Applicants: Jones et al.
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Remarks

Claims 7, 12, 14, 15, 17-19, 22-25, 27-30, 33, 34, 36, 38, 40, 42-49, and 50 are pending after the above amendments.

Of the above claims, claims 14, 17-19, 22-25, 28, 29, 33, 34, 36, 38, and 43 were noted as allowable, and claims 40, 42 and 45-49 were allowed. Claim 50 is new, being added with this amendment. Claims 7, 12, 15, 27, 30, and 44 stand rejected. For the reasons set forth below, claims 7, 12, 15, 27, 30, and 44 are believed patentable. New claim 50 is identical in scope to former claim 16 (noted as allowable) and thus likewise believed allowable. Reexamination and reconsideration in view of the remarks below is requested.

Objection

Claim 16 was objected to under 37 CFR 1.75 (c), as being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim.

Claim 16 has been deleted and resubmitted as claim 50. Since it appears that the reason for the objection to claim 16 was that it depended from a claim with a higher number (claim 17), and since new claim 50 depends from previous claim 17, the objection is believed to have been overcome. Since new claim 50 is identical in scope to former claim 16 which was noted as allowable, claim 50 should likewise be allowable.

35 U.S.C. 102(b) Rejection

Claim 15 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Catylators Limited (CL). Applicants respectfully traverse.

Claim 15 includes the following two elements:

- (1) "a gas-permeable catalyst container . . . comprising flame arresting material" and
- (2) a "gas-permeable hydrophobic solid film encasing said container."

With reference to Figure 1 of CL, CL discloses a catalyst 1 surrounded by a layer 2 of hygroscopic and anti-corrosive compound (page 1, lines 42-43), and an encapsulement 3 (page 1, line 49). The layer 2 surrounding the catalyst is hygroscopic (ability to absorb moisture) and can comprise lead dioxide with alumina (page 1, lines 45-46). The encapsulement 3 is made of porous glass or ceramic material that will allow the entry of hydrogen and oxygen.

*1 thin layer (wt)
2 catalyst IN CL
3 encapsulement*

In the present office action it is alleged that the outer layer 3 in Figure 1 of CL satisfies element (2) above of claim 15. In fact, item 3 of CL is a glass or ceramic encapsulement (container) (page 1 , lines 49-60 and Figure 1). CL does not teach any solid film encasing the encapsulement 3.

If item 3 of CL were viewed to be a solid film as alleged in the office action, then CL would not disclose a container as claimed in claim 15 since no other item in CL is a container. Item 2 of CL clearly is not a container as it is the hygroscopic layer.

CL clearly does not teach a solid film encasing the container, and thus does not teach all elements of claim 15. Claim 15 is believed allowable.

35 U.S.C. 103 Rejection

Claims 7, 12, 27, 30, and 44 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 as being unpatentable over German 2904842 in view of CL. Applicants respectfully traverse.

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As discussed above in relation to the 35 U.S.C. 102(b) rejection, CL does not teach at least one of the following elements:

- (1) "a gas-permeable catalyst container . . . comprising flame arresting material" and
- (2) a "gas-permeable hydrophobic solid film encasing said container."

Claims 7, 12, 27, 30, and 44 contain similar claim language as claim 15, and CL does not teach all elements of claim 15. Accordingly, the combination of German 2904842 in and CL does not disclose all elements as claimed, and thus the claims 7, 12, 27, 30, and 44 are believed patentable.

All claims are now believed allowable. Allowance of claims 7, 12, 14, 15, 17-19, 22-25, 27-30, 33, 34, 36, 38, 40, 42-49, and 50 is requested.

Respectfully submitted,



Gary A. Hecht, Reg. No. 36,826
SYNNESTVEDT & LECHNER LLP
1101 Market Street
2600 Aramark Tower
Philadelphia, PA 19107-2950
Tele: (215) 923-4466
Fax: (215) 923-2189

GAH:pmf